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**RE: SB821**

Dear Insurance Committee:

I am writing in opposition to SB821 'an Act Concerning Marital and Family Therapists. The wording of this act is not representative of what Marital and Family Therapists (MFTs) are. MFTs are 'mental health professionals trained in psychotherapy and systems theory and... treat mental and emotional disorders'(American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists). MFTs are trained and provide mental health services and are licensed to do so in Connecticut. I hope this clears up and confusion in our professional titles.

I would like to have you consider the direct financial impact of disallowing MFTs to participate in managed care. Connecticut has 946 licensed MFTs (2008), 5 colleges which offer MFT training, many small businesses and a variety of other considerations that will directly impact our State's economy. I will estimate by last year's figures to help inform you of the impact in the following:

1. Should this act become law, MFTs who are licensed would not need a license, as direct payment from managed care is the primary desire of those licensed;

946 LMFTs pay \$250 per year for licensure, which would be a loss of \$236,500 to the State of Connecticut

2. 5 Schools offer MFT degrees and would either close down or become severely impacted:

Southern CT State University:	36 students enrolled	\$288,000
Central CT State University:	95 students enrolled	\$760,000
Fairfield University:	22 students enrolled	\$176,000
St. Josephs College	25 students enrolled	\$300,000
University of Connecticut	24 students enrolled	\$178,000

This could have a possible effect on our schools with a potential of \$ 1,705,000 loss.

3. Licensed MFTs are to participate in Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to maintain their license. Many unlicensed MFTs also participate to help keep up on current mental health issues and therapies. A loss of 15 units at an average of \$400.00 would be a loss of  
\$378,000

a loss of taxable income to those who provide this training for MFTs.

4. MFT schools require an unpaid practicum and internship spanning from 1 to 2 years. Students are required to attain 500 direct client contact hours and typically give 500 hours of

non-therapeutic services at many non-profit agencies and school settings. Non-profits and schools would then have to contract these services out at a low average of \$20 per hour. An average of 75 students are in practicum and internship settings throughout the calendar year 1000 hours at \$20 per hour= \$20,000 for 75 students = **\$1,500,000** which would have to be then hired out by the non-profit or school system.

5. Many LMFTs have small business private practices which generate much taxable income for the State of Connecticut. These small businesses would most likely go bankrupt without the ability to charge managed care companies, especially in these hard economic times. I do not have a solid figure at this time as to the loss of taxable revenue but could work with CTAMFT to generate figures for future reference.

As you can see by the figures above, MFTs generate a considerable amount of revenue for the State of Connecticut. In these uncertain and constraining economic times, it would be in the best interest for the State of CT Insurance Committee to factor in these considerations when deciding on SB821.

I would like to close by stating that I am a MFT and work predominantly with children diagnosed with High Functioning Autism, Aspergers Disorder , and Pervasive Developmental Disorders. I am in private practice in Waterford, CT and have clients from as far away as Branford, Stonington, and Brooklyn. I work with my clients and their families mental health issues and support their growth into functional members of our society. I also train and have trained MFTs, social workers, and mental health counselors to work with this population.

Please eliminate this act as it will have a major impact on our economy and the individuals and families that we serve.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Dean, MS, LMFT